Final Report

V-88-[illegible]0208

Development Program - Agriculture Insight
Foundation Inc.

Funded by
The Agriculture Development Fund
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Prepared by: Mr. Rudy Friesen

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SUMMARY

PROJECT V-88-06-0208

The Agriculture Insight Foundation Inc. (Ag Insight) was created because of concern in the agriculture industry regarding the lack of agricultural knowledge in the general public. One of Ag Insight's first tasks was to assess the level of agricultural understanding in Saskatchewan. Ag Insight has not only provided the information, but a vehicle through which to address the situation.

Ag Insight's work over the last two and a half years has shown there is a definite place for education and awareness about Saskatchewan agriculture. The agriculture industry and education sector have encouraged Ag Insight's growth through interest and support of its efforts.

The process of agricultural awareness is a slow one but Ag Insight has established a solid foundation since its inception in September, 1988. Ag Insight plans to continue building on this foundation in support of Saskatchewan's most important industry -- agriculture.

FINAL REPORT
TO THE
SASKATCHEWAN AGRICULTURE - AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT FUND

FROM
THE AGRICULTURE INSIGHT FOUNDATION
MARCH 31, 1991

PROJECT V-88-06-0208

1. OVERVIEW

This report covers Ag Insight's progress and accomplishments over the course of its two and one half year existence. It reviews Ag Insight's major accomplishments to date, as well as project commitments and possibilities for the future. Because this report encompasses the entire term of our ADF contract, some information from previous reports to the Agriculture Development Fund is included.

2. PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Foundation's activity is divided into three areas: (a) Awareness, (b) Education, and (c) Membership, Public Relations, and Fundraising. Developments will be reviewed in each area.

a) Awarness

(i) Ag Insight's first major achievement was the release of the Survey of Non-Farm Residents' Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Agriculture results. This project was jointly funded by the Agriculture Development Fund and Ag Insight members. The findings certainly support Ag Insight's mandate. First, nearly 40 percent of the province's urban population know or care little about

agriculture. Second, the more people understand about agriculture, the more positive is their attitude towards it.

The survey results were released in Saskatoon in the spring of 1990. Numerous follow-up interviews were conducted; most with the Saskatchewan media but some with media people in other provinces. A number of organizations and government officials (including Agriculture Canada representatives) requested information about the survey. Ag Insight is still receiving requests for copies of the survey.

(ii) The survey clearly identifies a direction for Ag Insight's awareness campaign, and based on the survey findings, an extensive public education program is being developed. It includes a **Media Resource File** that contains agricultural terms the industry feels are often misused or misunderstood by the media. The project is currently being developed by Ag Insight. We are at the final draft stage and are planning for publication and distribution at the end of July. Industry funding from Hoechst and the Royal Bank is committed to cover these expenses.

A new **brochure** is being developed to update people on Ag Insight's work and goals. This basic brochure will include specific information inserts on agricultural topics identified as areas of concern.

Ag Insight plans to develop a corporate sponsorship package as a means of approaching potential members. This package will contain information from the survey to explain problems and concerns to potential members. It will also describe how they may become involved in helping Ag Insight deal with these concerns.

The specific areas of concern arising from the survey will be the focus of Ag Insight's advertising shells. Development of these shells is now complete, and industry is being approached to support the package. Prompt industry funding will allow a campaign launch to coincide with the fall harvest.

The areas of concern arising from the survey are also the focus of a weekly agriculture feature currently being run on CJWW Radio in Saskatoon and CKBI Prince Albert. The feature, "Insight on Agriculture", airs each Friday. Its purpose is to explain agriculture to the non-agricultural public. In time, the radio coverage of this feature will expand. Ag Insight is currently pursuing air time on other radio stations throughout the province, including CHAB Moose Jaw and CKCK Regina.

(iii) The provincial media tour by Ag Insight's Executive Vice President continues. This tour provides media outlets (both print and electronic) with background material about the Foundation and its work. Last spring, the tour visited central Saskatchewan (including Davidson and Lumsden) and the southeast (including Weyburn and Estevan). Further travels in summer and fall included Regina, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, and Melville. Once the Media Resource File is completed, continuation of the media tour will involve its distribution. This will enhance the tour by giving members of the media a greater interest in the Ag Insight visit. Currently, the tour is being tied to pursuit of air time for the radio feature.

b) <u>Education</u>

(i) Ag Insight's involvement with the agricultural video, a cooperative project with Saskatchewan Education, has

concluded because the video has been completed. (Ag Insight assisted with script writing and video editing). Saskatchewan Education intends to have the print material accompanying the video finished and the entire package distributed to Saskatchewan schools this spring. CTV affiliates across the province aired the video on April 28, 1991 at 6:30 p.m. This gave the video and Ag Insight provincial exposure. Response has been very positive. Also, the video received a gold award at the International Film Festival in Houston, Texas.

(ii) Phase I of Ag Insight's Bibliography of Resources, an annotated bibliography of agricultural resources, has been completed and distributed to Saskatchewan schools. Work continues on an annual update of the material. Phase II will include contacts for in-school programs, farm tours, and specialized information.

(iii) Ag Insight's cooperative project with CN Rail has also been completed. Ag Insight developed the Teacher's Guide to accompany CN Rail's "Grains and Seeds in Canadian Agriculture" kit. The guide and kit have been distributed free of charge to Saskatchewan French and English elementary schools. Kits and guides for middle and secondary schools, and public organizations are available from Ag Insight at cost, which is $30 for the entire package, $25 for the kit only, and $5 for the Teacher's Guide only.

(iv) Funding from the Future Corporation has been made available for two projects mentioned in previous progress reports. The classroom presentation is designed to introduce elementary students to agriculture. Experiments based on basic but important agricultural concepts, such as plant growth, soil conditions, and drought, make up the resource boxes, which accompany the

classroom presentation. Both projects were piloted in March. Saskatoon (West), Saskatoon (East), and Rosetown School Divisions participated. Volunteers from the agriculture industry delivered the presentation. In April and May, teachers will work through the experiments with their students. Following recommendations from the participants, Ag Insight plans to design the package for availability to elementary schools in Saskatchewan. Teacher evaluations of the project have been extremely encouraging to this point.

(v) Since its inception, Ag Insight has been active on two committees pertaining to agricultural education. Ag Insight had four representatives on Saskatchewan Education's **Agriculture in the Classroom Reference Committee**. The Committee's mandate has expired, but Ag Insight has been able to use the Committee's suggestions to help set firm goals with respect to agriculture in the classroom.

The "Agri-Ed Daily" at Agribition's **Agri-Ed Showcase** was provided by Ag Insight. In 1990, the "Daily" was in a bulletin board format instead of a newsletter format. Ag Insight also assisted in the development of a static display advertising the Agri-Ed Showcase. Ag Insight plans to continue its commitment of working with the Agri-Ed Showcase.

(vi) The **summer farm experience for teachers** pilot is scheduled for July 23, 24, and 25. Planning for this event has been completed. An invitation for teachers to attend the workshop is being advertised in 49 schools in and around Saskatoon. Industry funding from the Horned Cattle Purchases Act Advisory Committee has been secured to cover the actual costs of staging the three day event.

(vii) The University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists have approached Ag Insight about working together on the development of a summer institute for teachers on the University of Saskatchewan campus. This one week institute would assist teachers in the area of agricultural instruction. Since our last progress report, meetings have been held and a committee has been struck to develop the program. The committee consists of Mr. Friesen and Ms. Karbonik-Redmond of Ag Insight, Mr. Bruce Hobin of the University of Saskatchewan Extension Division, Dr. Bob McKercher of the College of Agriculture, Ms. Karen McDonald of Saskatchewan Education, and Mr. Lorne Yeo, head of the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists' Education Committee. At this time, the University and Ag Insight are planning to implement the institute in August, 1992.

c) Memberships, Public Relations, and Fundraising

(i) **Membership** in the Foundation continues to increase as new organizations join and current participants renew their memberships. Foundation staff have been asked to make presentations to various groups in recent months, including the Ministers' Advisory Committee on Rural Development and Diversification, the Crop Protection Institute of Canada, the SeCan Association, the Saskatchewan Water Corporation, Saskatchewan Rural Municipalities, United Grain Growers, and others. Even though the agricultural economy is suffering, Ag Insight is encouraged by the steady growth in its membership.

(ii) Work on Ag Insight's **newsletter** continues. We are committed to publishing two newsletters per year. We enclosed several copies of the latest edition with our previous report. Among noteable items in the newsletter is the back page which shows our increasing membership.

(iii) Ag Insight's first Annual Meeting was held in November of 1989. Members were asked to have faith in supporting the Foundation's ideas. Ag Insight held a successful second Annual Meeting in November of 1990. About 65 people attended the meeting with a larger member representation than in the first year. Members had the opportunity to see first-hand the projects their funding helped to complete. They saw their faith rewarded. Ag Insight was encouraged by the number of interested parties who attended to learn more about the Foundation's work. If progress continues as it has since the second Annual Meeting, the third Annual Meeting could see a membership of 100 viewing our latest project completions.

3. STAFF AND TIME

As indicated in previous project reports, staff time spent on ADF-funded projects is difficult to calculate because of overlap between ADF-funded and non-ADF-funded projects. It is estimated that over the course of the last two years, 80 percent of staff time has been devoted to projects funded through the Agriculture Development Fund; however, activity in non-ADF-funded projects continues to increase. As an example, over the last four months, 60 percent of our time has been spent on non-ADF-funded projects.

Ag Insight had one staff change and one staff addition in the last year. Rob Brown, who played a major role in establishing Ag Insight, resigned as an employee of the Foundation in June, 1990. At that time, Rudy Friesen, former Agriculture Director at CJWW Radio in Saskatoon, assumed the position of Executive Vice President. In July, 1990, Melody Lewis was hired part-time as Ag Insight's Administrative Assistant. She has been most helpful in looking after many of the Foundation's administrative duties which has allowed the Executive Vice President more time to concentrate

on public relations, fundraising, and public awareness. The position of Program Development Officer has been constant since its development in February, 1989.

4. FUTURE PROJECTS

Through our work to date, we have developed several ideas for new and exciting projects in both the agricultural education and agricultural awareness areas.

Agrikit International has developed a kit displaying the flour milling process. This kit is similar in appearance to CN's "Grains and Seeds in Canadian Agriculture" kit. Ag Insight is in the process of finding a sponsor to help develop this kit for use in Saskatchewan schools.

Ag Insight intends to develop a radio advertisement campaign for Agriculture Week. This campaign would follow the format used by Sask Power and 4H, where radio ads are written by students, with the ads running on provincial radio stations. While the Sask Power campaign focuses on electrical safety, Ag Insight would like to pursue this format using the theme of agriculture's importance to Saskatchewan residents.

Kidproof Magazine is a successful children's publication with a broad readership among Saskatchewan elementary students. The magazine has agreed to have Ag Insight place an agricultural insert in this magazine. The Foundation is currently pursuing funding for this endeavor.

Saskatchewan Economic Diversification and Trade, Science and Technology Saskatchewan has also approached Ag Insight with regard to a cooperative effort. In the mid 1980's, the department developed a Biotechnology Teacher's Guide which was distributed to Saskatchewan schools. The department is interested in working with the Foundation to update and redistribute the guide.